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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/26/2027  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [MOPS](#) [GG](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: U.S. RESPONSE TO GEORGIAN OFFER OF ADDITIONAL  
COMBAT ELEMENT TO OIF

REF: A) DIAIMADSWA 2230755 B) EMB TBILISI - DESK EMAILS

Classified By: EUR A/S Daniel Fried for Reasons 1.4 (a), (b), and (d).

11. (U) This is an action request for February 27. Please  
see paragraph 3.

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BACKGROUND  
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12. (S) Per refs A and B, President Saakashvili has decided  
to offer a 2,514-strong infantry brigade (including three  
infantry battalions and logistical support) for deployment to  
Iraq for a limited period. Georgia wants to be part of the  
surge and to actively participate in Coalition operations.  
Total Georgian contingent in Iraq would then be over 3,300 \*  
third in size to the US and UK. The USG accepts the  
Government of Georgia,s (GOG) valuable offer with the  
understanding that further detailed coordination will be  
required to bring the brigade to Iraq. Deputy Secretary of  
Defense England plans to convey this message to Georgian  
Ambassador to Washington Sikharulidze in a morning meeting on  
February 27. The USG will be considering all specifics of  
deployment of the Georgian brigade, including timing. The  
USG asks the GOG not to go public with its plans for an  
increase in its contribution to the Coalition at this time.  
We would prefer the GOG engage the Government of Iraq (GOI)  
on this so when it is announced it could be portrayed as a  
Georgian offer to Iraq. The GOG and the GOI should  
coordinate closely on this offer.

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ACTION REQUEST: TALKING POINTS  
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13. (S/REL GEORGIA) On February 27, as close as possible to  
the time of Deputy Secretary England,s meeting with Georgian  
Ambassador Sikharulidze (approximately 8:00 a.m. EST),  
Ambassador is requested to accept the Georgian offer in  
principle and may draw on the following talking points  
cleared by the interagency community. BEGIN TALKING POINTS:

--Express thanks for the Government of Georgia,s (GOG)  
steadfast and courageous support. The GOG already  
contributes a total of 859 troops to Iraq, both in  
Multinational Forces - Iraq and the United Nations Protection  
Force.

--Welcome and accept the offer, in principle, recognizing  
just how substantial it is.

-- Note that Georgia is at the forefront of allies supporting the United States in the Global War on Terror. Their expanded offer of commitment comes at a critical juncture, and we recognize Georgia,s expanded level of support.

--State that the brigade will be given meaningful missions that directly contribute to developing and sustaining momentum in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

--Note that our staffs are already working out the details of where, how, and when MNF-I would employ the brigade.

--Offer to work with the GOG to determine the training needs, equipment requirements, and logistics of adding a Georgian Infantry Brigade in Iraq.

--Ask that the GOG continue to support Operation Iraqi Freedom at the same force levels after their surge period is over.

--Suggest that any public announcements will need very careful handling and co-ordination with the U.S. and the Government of Iraq (GOI).

--Urge the GOG to make this offer to the GOI. We can help in communicating with the Iraqi Government if needed. Our preference would be a public statement simultaneously announcing the GOG offer and an Iraqi acceptance.

--Note that an announcement would have the greatest impact if held until after the general concept of operations for the deployment have been worked out.

--Welcome Georgia,s continued defense reform efforts and NATO/IPAP progress. Georgia should continue to work with the U.S. and its European partners on its military reform efforts and NATO IPAP/PARP commitments concurrently with its planned large-scale deployment to Iraq. Work on defense transformation efforts in Georgia should continue apace.

--Look forward to continuing this strong security partnership in Iraq and other locations around the globe.

--Thank Georgia again for its steadfast friendship with the United States.

END TALKING POINTS.

RICE